



# **San Francisco VA Health Care System**

**2023-2024**

Psychology Externship Program

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## Psychology Externship Training Program Training Year 2023-2024

Application deadline is **February 24, 2023**

### Training Opportunities

San Francisco VA Health Care System (SFVAHCS) offers a multitude of tracks for psychology doctoral students to train on externship (practicum). One of our community based clinics outside of San Francisco: **Community Mental Health/Santa Rosa**; as well as several rotations at our San Francisco campus: **Couples and Family Therapy Program; General Addictions; PTSD Treatment; Women's Mental Health; Health Psychology; General Outpatient Psychotherapy; Neuropsychology; Psychosocial Rehabilitation; Substance Use Disorders (SUDs) and PTSD Clinic (SUPT), LGBTQ+ and Substance Use Disorders, and Psychology Research Assessment Clinic**. There is also a new LGBTQ+ supplemental externship. One does not need to apply to any other rotations to apply to the supplemental externship.

The following pages include specific descriptions of the separate externship training rotations. A copy of our comprehensive Psychology Doctoral Internship Training Program brochure is available on our website if you would like more information about our medical center and our training site.

[Psychology Training Programs | VA San Francisco Health Care | Veterans Affairs](#)

### Eligibility & Requirements

To be eligible for externship placement at San Francisco VA Health Care System, you must be in good standing at an APA accredited doctoral program in psychology. All applicants must have had varicella (chicken pox) or the vaccination and will be required to take a PPD test prior to start. San Francisco VA is a drug-free workplace. A non-US citizen extern must meet two conditions to be appointed at the VA; 1) they must be legally able to live and work in the US, and 2) they must have a US Social Security Number. Please review additional national eligibility requirements for VA trainee appointments at the links below. If you have any questions, please reach out to Dr. Torrence.

[https://www.sanfrancisco.va.gov/docs/Instructions\\_to\\_Trainee\\_Psychology.pdf](https://www.sanfrancisco.va.gov/docs/Instructions_to_Trainee_Psychology.pdf)

[https://www.va.gov/OAA/TQCVL/TQCVL\\_HPTInstructions\\_V1.pdf](https://www.va.gov/OAA/TQCVL/TQCVL_HPTInstructions_V1.pdf)

Externships are without financial compensation (WOC) are typically 16-20 hours per week; days and hours will be negotiated with supervisors and may vary between emphasis areas. The academic training year begins on **July 1** and ends on **June 30**. There is a 3-4 day required Psychology Trainee Orientation at the start of the training year (**July 3, July 5, July 6, July 7**).

### Application Procedure & Selection

To apply, please copy and paste the application at the end of this brochure into a word or pdf document and email the enclosed application materials to **Artrisha Jones** [artrisha.jones@va.gov](mailto:artrisha.jones@va.gov), **Nicole Ford** [nicole.ford1@va.gov](mailto:nicole.ford1@va.gov) AND **Dr. Nicole Torrence** at [Nicole.Torrence@va.gov](mailto:Nicole.Torrence@va.gov) no later than **February 24, 2023**. Please ask your letter writers to also use this email address when sending letters of recommendation.

On the application cover page, Section 1, please **rank order** your preferences if you are applying to more than one area. Your application will be reviewed by the rotation supervisors you selected in your rank order list. If a supervisor in a specific rotation would like to invite you for an interview, they will contact you directly to set up a date and time. If you are not invited to interview by an emphasis area, you will not be considered or ranked by that particular emphasis area. Interviews usually take place during March.

SFVAHCS is participating in the BAPIC Match\* and will submit individual rankings for each emphasis area on **April 7, 2023**. BAPIC Match Results will be announced on **April 19, 2023**.

\*If your program does not participate in BAPIC or you are not enrolled in BAPIC, please note that in your application or let us know directly in your interview so that we can consider you outside of the formal match. VA will require an affiliation agreement with your program if one is not already established. Please inquire with Dr. Torrence.

Please note: It is important that applicants be aware that we make a clear distinction between “internship” and “externship” training, and applicants are asked to sign a brief statement at the end of our externship application so as to avoid any misunderstanding. We use the term “externship” to denote a part-time unfunded practicum experience with a concentration in a particular area. The hours accrued as an extern at our medical center are not counted for California licensure as a psychologist. If you are a respecialization student and need to count your hours, please discuss this with your potential supervisor during your interview.

### **Contact Information**

For questions about specific rotations, you may contact the supervisors directly at the email address listed on each rotation description. General questions about the overall SFVAHCS Psychology Training Program may be sent to Nicole Torrence, PhD, Director of Training, at [Nicole.Torrence@va.gov](mailto:Nicole.Torrence@va.gov).

Note: We kindly ask that you do not call the program to check on the status of your application unless you feel there is a clear problem with receipt. We aim to preserve staff support resources as much as possible in order to sort and review applications in a timely manner.

Thank you for your interest in our program.

### **Covid-19 Updates**

The vast majority of clinical services quickly moved to virtual modalities in March, 2020 due to the pandemic. As of this writing (January 2023) all trainees are currently working hybrid (remotely and in person) and most clinical services are being offered virtually. Given the upcoming potential changes to the pandemic landscape (i.e., vaccines), it is unclear when clinical work will be safe to return on site. Our local leadership has encouraged continued mental health services to be conducted in a hybrid model but it is too early to tell what's to come in the 2023-2024 academic year.

There are some onboarding tasks that have to be completed onsite (e.g., fingerprinting, badges, setting up VA issued laptops, etc). These can usually be accomplished in one day. Please inquire in your interview about any expected changes or updates. Stay safe.

## **Santa Rosa Community Based Care with Trauma Focus (CBOC)**

The Santa Rosa Veterans Clinic is the largest VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in Northern California. Our mission is to provide first-rate care for Veterans living in the surrounding suburban and rural areas. Our training team aims to help externs develop their professional identities by working with a range of mental health concerns with an emphasis on the psychological consequences of trauma in the Veteran community. This includes childhood, combat, and military sexual trauma. We welcome graduate students who are in the second year or above. Externs with more experience and advanced skill sets will be assigned a more complex caseload.

Our clinic serves a predominantly cisgender male population, although the number of minority Veterans accessing services here is increasing and the ratio of female Veterans is quite high. Our largest cohorts seeking mental health care are Post-9/11 combat Veterans, Vietnam Era combat Veterans, and Veterans with sexual trauma histories. Our patients represent a wide-range of diversity in terms of ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, and SES. Most of the patients who seek care at our clinic are struggling with PTSD, SUD, MDD, anger, bereavement, insomnia, and often some combination of these.

### **Supervision**

Given our focus on trauma-informed care, extern training centers around gaining a more comprehensive understanding of how traumatic experiences in the military intersect with a Veteran's cultural and developmental history. This can present as a variety of mental health issues, such as PTSD, MDD, anxiety, and SUD. Externs at the Santa Rosa CBOC will gain confidence and skill in evaluating and treating trauma in addition to a broad array of mental health needs in Veterans. During the course of their training year, externs move towards greater competence in both time-limited, evidence-based treatments (PE, DBT, CPT) and longer term psychotherapies for chronic disorders (e.g., complex grief, MDD, BPD, GAD, relationship distress).

Because the Santa Rosa CBOC is a generalist clinic, externs have the opportunity to work outside trauma-specific therapies. As such, clinical training can be individualized to fit the professional goals of each trainee. Further, externs are guided as they develop skills in assessment, interdisciplinary communication, and group facilitation. We run a number of popular groups here that include MBCT for SUD, ACT for anxiety, PTSD 101, and LGBTQ+ Support. Successful outcomes in the treatment of trauma-related disorders and general mental health rely on robust case conceptualization skills. Externs have frequent opportunities to develop these skills through formal supervision and informal consultation.

Externs receive a minimum of one hour individual supervision weekly with a staff psychologist as well as an additional hour of supervision with a postdoctoral fellow. Informal consultation with clinic physicians and staff is welcomed and occurs regularly. Santa Rosa clinicians and supervisors utilize a variety of theoretical orientations, including mind/body awareness, CBT, and psychodynamic modalities.

### **Externship Positions**

The Santa Rosa CBOC offers two externships (16 to 20 hours per week) to pre-doctoral students enrolled in APA-accredited programs. These hours can be covered over 2-4 days in the clinic, with Tuesday being a required day. The primary emphasis of the externship is developing case conceptualization through the lens of trauma, and learning to use Evidence-Based Practices. Externs typically conduct one initial assessment, provide individual therapy to 3-6 patients, and co-facilitate 1-3 therapy groups each week.

**Didactic Training**

Externs fully participate in team meetings, case presentations, and a weekly clinical care seminar. Our training team is very dedicated to helping externs develop their skills in the areas of: clinical interviewing, diagnostic formulation, clinical conceptualization, clinical writing, and cognitive-behavioral and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave treatments. We offer thoughtful feedback in a supportive training environment.

Contact: Dr. Jeremy Joseph, PhD, Santa Rosa CBOC Training Coordinator at [Jeremy.Joseph@va.gov](mailto:Jeremy.Joseph@va.gov)

## **Couple and Family Therapy Program**

The Couple and Family Therapy Program in the Mental Health Service works with veterans and their romantic partners and/or family members (e.g., children, parents, siblings). Externs will gain experience working with veterans in couple and/or family therapy who present with a variety of relational issues, such as coping with mental health symptoms in the context of the relationship (e.g., one or all partners/family members coping with PTSD, Substance Use Disorders, Depression, Anxiety Disorders, Pain, and Comorbid Disorders; communication; sexual intimacy; and the veteran's transition from military to civilian life. Externs will work with an interdisciplinary team of mental health providers; the Couple and Family Therapy Program includes UCSF faculty who are licensed clinical social workers and a licensed clinical psychologist.

Notably, although we cannot predict the landscape of the pandemic in the coming training year, we have been able to adapt all care to telemental health. Should we continue to be working remotely, all didactics, clinical work, and supervision will take place over video.

### **Required training experiences:**

Weekly seminar: There is a weekly seminar that externs will attend during the first 6 months of the training year. Trainees participate in didactics, present cases (accompanied by written descriptions of the couples/families and brief video clips of therapy sessions), and participate in live Reflecting Team sessions in which trainees bring in their couple/family and conduct a session while observed by their peers and supervisors for consultation purposes. The weekly seminars are led by Program staff, and can include psychiatry, psychology, and social work trainees and mental health staff who desire training in couple/family therapy.

The primary treatment modality of the clinic is Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT), which aims to help strengthen the attachment bond between partners/family members and create emotional safety within the relationship. Externs will learn about attachment theory and how it applies to couple and family relationships.

During the second half of the training year, externs may choose to continue attending the weekly seminars or opt to be involved in additional training experiences. For externs whose programs require 12 months of didactics, there is the option of participating in other didactics that are in line with one's training goals (e.g., SUD seminar, GPOS seminar, etc.; externs are encouraged to talk with his/her/their supervisor about possible seminar opportunities for the second half of the training year).

Phone screens: Externs will assist Program staff with phone screens of referred couples/families. This involves contacting referred couples/families by phone and assessing the presenting problem(s) and the presence/history of severe domestic violence, heavy substance abuse, and risk issues.

Couple/family cases: Externs are expected to work with 3-5 couples/families. The majority of referrals to our program are couples rather than family cases; should externs have a particular interest in working with families, we will do our best to facilitate family case assignments.

Supervision: Externs will have 2 hours of supervision per week, which includes 1-hour individual supervision with a licensed psychologist and 1-hour group supervision with either a licensed psychologist or a licensed clinical social worker.

**\*Schedule Requirements:** Externs are expected to complete a minimum of 16 hours weekly on the externship.

Externs are required to be available on **either:**

- Mondays 8:30 – 9:50 AM
- Tuesdays 10:30 – 11:50 AM
  - Remaining hours for the externship (e.g., supervision, clinical contact hours) can be scheduled at the externs' convenience.

**Contact information:** Jerika Norona, PhD at [jerika.norona@va.gov](mailto:jerika.norona@va.gov)  
Sarah Shonkwiler, LCSW at [sarah.shonkwiler@va.gov](mailto:sarah.shonkwiler@va.gov)

### **OPTIONAL TRAINING EXPERIENCES IN COUPLE AND FAMILY THERAPY:**

Assessment/research: Should externs desire, there are opportunities to be involved in data collection, entry, and analyses of pre- and post-treatment individual and relationship functioning. Externs can be involved in report preparation on case outcomes for the Program directors. Data is also available should externs be interested in preparing research poster presentations or manuscripts.

Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT) Mini-Rotation: Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT) is a 10-week program for individuals whose family members struggle with substance use disorders. It is an evidence-based treatment with roots in CBT.

The goals of CRAFT are to help family members:

- Learn effective communication strategies
- Recognize and reinforce their loved one's nondrinking/using behavior
- Refrain from interfering in the naturally occurring consequences of their loved one's substance use
- Develop an understanding of what leads to substance abuse episodes
- Take safety precautions during the transition to new ways of responding

Overall, the goals of CRAFT involve increasing positive lifestyles for all family members and teaching family members how to support their veteran during his/her/their substance use treatment.

Mini-Rotation Requirements:

- Commit to a minimum of 6 months
- Carry 1-2 cases



## General Addictions Clinics

The General Addiction Clinics Externship includes a range of excellent training opportunities in the assessment and treatment of substance use disorders and co-occurring conditions that span the continuum of recovery from initial engagement and contemplation of change through long-term recovery. This rotation is embedded within **Addiction Recovery Treatment Services (ARTS)** consisting of the three clinics described below. The extern will work with veterans with a wide range of substance use and psychiatric comorbidity as well as considerable psychosocial stressors. Problems may include psychiatric disorders such as primary affective disorders and primary psychoses, transient affective or psychotic symptoms resulting from substance abuse, PTSD or other anxiety disorders, dementia and varying degrees of cognitive impairment, and personality disorders. Substances used include alcohol, amphetamines, cocaine, benzodiazepines, opiates and cannabis. Approximately 70% of veterans who participate in the IOP or DAT programs have problems with multiple substances.

1) The substance use **Transitions Program** is a twice-a-week group designed to enhance opportunities for *early engagement and initiation* of treatment for Veterans with substance use problems. This rotation is centered around Motivational Interviewing/Harm Reduction to help address ambivalence about changing substance use and related behaviors. Many of the Veterans are referred directly from the Behavioral Health Access Center, the Primary Care clinics, the Community Living Center, and other areas of the medical center.

2) **The Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)** provides comprehensive individual and group treatment for *acute substance use and co-occurring disorders* with programming occurring M/W/F mornings and optional clinical activities on T/Th. The program is designed to assist individuals with a goal of abstinence from substance use. Clinical interventions are designed to address substance use, co-occurring mental health disorders, as well as SAMHSA's 4 dimensions to support a life in recovery (Health, Home, Purpose, and Community). Attendees are encouraged to participate in recovery activities in the community including mutual recovery groups (e.g., AA, NA, Life Ring, SMART Recovery). Groups in IOP include CBT-Relapse Prevention, Seeking Safety, DBT Skills, Community meetings conducted with an MI frame, Goal Setting, Spirituality & Recovery, and Nutrition. Individual care coordination sessions occur at least weekly and all veterans receive initial psychiatric evaluation and follow-up as indicated.

3) **The Drug and Alcohol Treatment Clinic (DAT)** is designed to encourage *longitudinal care*, with both an abstinence-based track and a moderation/exploration track. Treatment within the abstinence track is based on a three phase model (roughly equivalent to stabilization/sobriety, sustained recovery/abstinence, and integration/ ongoing maintenance). The moderation/exploration uses motivational interviewing and harm reduction approaches to engage veterans and assist them in working towards change. The DAT clinic utilizes group psychotherapy as the main treatment modality. Early treatment is highly structured and behaviorally oriented. There are skills-based groups such as CBT for Substance Use Disorder and Matrix Group for Stimulant Use Disorders. Elective groups have also included Mindfulness Based Relapse Prevention and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for SUD. Semi-structured, process style groups, where advanced phases are progressively less structured and more psychotherapy/insight oriented are a key part of most veteran's care in

the DAT clinic. In this context assisting veterans with recovery involves care coordination and collaboration with numerous community partners including transitional housing and residential treatment programs, back-to-work programs, VA medical providers, probation officers, and various social service agencies.

Extern activities in the above clinics will include **co-leading groups, providing care coordination, and individual therapy**. Externs will work with their primary supervisors to determine individualized training plans that will include didactics and readings in addition to the clinical opportunities described above. There are two seminars that are open and available to externs in the General Addictions Clinic. Externs may participate in a Substance Abuse Programs seminar facilitated by John Straznickas, M.D. (Fridays noon to 1pm for 6 months) and/or the advanced substance use disorders seminar (Wednesdays 1-2:30 year round), which often features cutting edge research and guest lecturers who are experts in the field (e.g. Westley Clark, MD, Lisa Najavits, PhD). Externs will be encouraged to develop talk and deliver case presentations when possible.

Each of the clinical experiences in this rotation occur within the context of multidisciplinary teams and in a rich training environment. You will have an opportunity to work with addiction medicine fellows, anesthesia pain fellows, psychiatry residents, medical students, and other psychology trainees. Externs will be selected to work with one of the Staff Psychologists as a primary supervisor, but may have the opportunity to do rotations or focused projects or cases with other supervisors within ARTS. The possible supervisors are Chris Galloway, PhD, Melissa London, PhD, and/or Kellie Rollins, PsyD.

Contact information: Dr. Galloway at [Christopher.galloway@va.gov](mailto:Christopher.galloway@va.gov), Dr. London at [Melissa.london2@va.gov](mailto:Melissa.london2@va.gov)

## General Psychiatric Outpatient Program (GPOS) Psychotherapy Clinic

The GPOS Psychotherapy Clinic at the VA San Francisco Medical Center provides training in evidence-based psychotherapy for the treatment mood and anxiety disorders, as well as related and co-occurring conditions (e.g., borderline personality disorder, psychotic disorders, insomnia, nightmares). The program focuses on the use of evidence-based psychotherapy (primarily cognitive-behavioral interventions) and the use of case formulation to guide treatment. Trainees can participate in structured cognitive-behavioral group therapy for major depression, CBT group for anxiety disorders, and individual cognitive-behavioral therapy for mood and anxiety disorders. Additional possible opportunities (depending on resources, interest, and patient need) include cognitive-behavior therapy for psychosis, cognitive-behavior therapy for insomnia, imagery rehearsal therapy for nightmares, mindfulness-based stress reduction, diagnostic assessment using the Structured Clinical Interview for the DSM-IV (SCID), diagnostic screening, and provision of services via video-conference. GPOS externship applicants are also eligible to interview for the Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) mini-rotation: This includes participation in the weekly team meeting on Tuesdays, conducting individual DBT, and co-leading a formal DBT skills group (Wednesdays or Thursdays) for Veterans with borderline personality disorder and/or a history of high risk behavior.

### Supervision

Clinical supervision will be provided by Susanna Fryer, PhD, Karen Kasch, PhD, and Emily Pereira, PsyD, and there are opportunities to work with and receive supervision from GPOS psychiatrists, psychologists, and nurses. Supervision will be provided in weekly one-on-one sessions and co-therapy experiences in cognitive-behavioral groups. Treatment will be either audio or video recorded for supervision purposes. Trainees can also participate in group supervision team and receive additional supervision from postdoctoral fellows in the rotation.

### Didactic Training

There is a weekly, 9-month long seminar open to trainees and staff on evidence-based psychotherapy. Topics include principles of cognitive and behavioral therapies, overview of current evidence-based therapies (interpersonal psychotherapy, dialectical behavior therapy, “third wave” interventions) application to specific disorders (depression, anxiety, personality disorders, psychosis) and additional topics of interest to the class.

### Externship Positions

There will be up to three externship training positions available in the GPOS Psychotherapy Clinic during any given training year. Externship training will be structured as a part-time (up to 20 hours/week) training experience over a 12-month period. The training year begins on July 1st and continues through June 30th. Externs are anticipated to spend their time as follows:

% Effort	Hrs/wk	Training Activity
75	15	Direct patient care & documentation
10	2	Seminar/didactic training
15	3	Supervision

Contact information: Dr. Kasch at [karen.kasch@va.gov](mailto:karen.kasch@va.gov)

# Health Psychology

SFVA's Health Psychology Externship provides clinical training in integrated care and behavioral medicine, with a particular focus on training externs in the application and treatment of cognitive-behavioral therapy for mental and behavioral health conditions within integrated care settings. The Health Psychology externs conduct health-specific psychological assessments, provide psychological consultation, and facilitate individual and group psychotherapy in multiple interdisciplinary clinics such as, Integrated Care Psychology Outpatient, Anesthesia Pain Management, Bariatric, and Psychosocial Rehabilitation. Common referrals include chronic pain, anxiety, depression, sleep disorders, smoking cessation, weight control, adherence, and adjustment to chronic illness/disease.

## Supervision

Primary clinical supervision is provided by Payal Mapara, PsyD, Pain Psychologist, and Erin Watson, PsyD, Health Psychologist. Secondary supervision is provided by Dr. Lindsay Wakayama and Integrated Care Post-doctoral residents. Additional supervisory experiences include group sessions, case conferences/seminar, collaborative assessments, and individual and group co-therapy experiences.

## Didactic EdPACT Training

The EdPACT training model brings together teams of health care providers and staff, including internal medicine residents, nurse practitioner students and residents, psychology trainees, pharmacy residents, nutrition residents, and social work trainees to build core knowledge and skills that trainees apply to their own individual patients and the clinical systems in which they work. This educational model incorporates design principles for optimal workplace learning, using experiences from clinical practice as the primary curricular material, establishing a 17 culture and supportive working relationships that reinforce patient-centered approaches to care, and activating providers/staff/trainees to take responsibility for improving patient care. Communication, teamwork, and continuous performance improvement are the primary foci of interprofessional skill-building. Residents spend one to four hours in EdPACT interprofessional curriculum per week.

## Externship Positions

There are **TWO** externship training positions available in the Health Psychology Program during any given training year. Externship training in Health Psychology is structured as a part-time (20 hours/week) training experience over a 12-month period. All clinical training activities in Health Psychology are scheduled on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Monday is a **required** training day. The remaining 12 hours is split between Wednesday and Thursday. The training year begins on July 1st and continues through June 30th. ***Please note that supervision may be provided virtually. Please confirm that virtual supervision will meet specific graduate program requirements.***

The Health Psychology extern spends their time as follows (based on 20 hours/week):

<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	
Monday	8:00a-4:00p	<b>REQUIRED</b>
Wednesday	8:00-4:30pm	
Thursday	8:00-12:30pm	

Contact information: Dr. Mapara at [Payal.Mapara@va.gov](mailto:Payal.Mapara@va.gov)

# Neuropsychology

**Please note, we do not always have a position open for neuropsychology. Feel free to apply and/or contact Dr. Rothlind for more information.**

The Neuropsychology Externship Program (20 hours/week) provides training in neuropsychological evaluation and consultation. Externs participate in weekly team meetings with alternating format: journal club, didactic/special presentations, and mock ABPP-CN board examination fact-finding and case-conferences/group supervision meetings (1.5 hours weekly). A variety of assessment techniques are taught and practiced, and basic psychometric principles are reviewed. Trainees gain experience applying a hypothesis-testing approach to the neuropsychological evaluation, and learn to select and integrate methods from clinical interviewing, intelligence testing, cognitive screening assessments, more detailed battery-approaches to neuropsychological assessment, ~~projective testing~~, and traditional self-report techniques (MMPI-2, PAI, NEO-PI-R, etc.). Basic neuroanatomy is also reviewed in didactics and in individual supervision. Further opportunities are available for attendance at brain-cutting and psychiatry and neurology rounds.

The Neuropsychology Program provides consultation services to many different programs of the SFVAMC and VA clinics and programs in the surrounding region. Clinical conditions include neurodevelopmental conditions (e.g. LD and ADHD), acquired conditions related to strokes and TBI, Epilepsy) and neurodegenerative disorders including Alzheimer's dementia and Parkinson's disease, and other Axis I and Axis II mental health disorders (including PTSD, mood, and substance abuse disorders). Trainees will have an opportunity to perform evaluations for individually scheduled outpatient appointments or at the bedside, and to participate in the weekly multidisciplinary Memory Disorders Clinic. With supervision, practicum students (externs) participate in all phases of patient evaluation and consultation, including information gathering, assessment, scoring and interpretation, report writing and case-conferences, feedback and consultation to patients, family members and health care providers. Referral questions are broad and range from educational evaluations and recommendations for accommodations, requests for diagnostic clarification, determination of decision-making capacity, and more. Externs may also participate in neurorehabilitation and learn techniques to support or remediate cognitive impairment.

Contact information: Dr. Rothlind at [Johannes.rothlind@va.gov](mailto:Johannes.rothlind@va.gov)

## Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Clinical Team (PCT)

The PCT at San Francisco VA Health Care System is one of the largest in the nation with regard to clinical activity. Our PCT specializes in the outpatient treatment of veterans from all eras who have PTSD related to combat, combat support, combat training, or military sexual trauma (MST) in the course of active duty military service. We also treat veterans whose primary mental health diagnosis is PTSD, regardless of trauma type, and a significant proportion of our patients have histories of complex trauma. Many of our veterans suffer from co-morbid disorders, depression and substance abuse being the most frequent. Issues regarding medical illness, chronic pain, postwar adjustment, and relationship stress are increasingly common.

We serve a predominantly cisgender male population ranging in age from 18 to 90+ years, although the number of cisgender women and transgender individuals accessing services is increasing. Our population is quite diverse, with multiple ethnicities, ages, sexual orientations, and levels of SES represented. Veterans are not required to have served in a war to be treated by the PCT; however, our largest cohorts are Vietnam Era veterans and veterans of the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom [OEF], Operation Iraqi Freedom [OIF], and Operation New Dawn [OND]). We also serve veterans from modern deployments (e.g., Persian Gulf, Desert Storm, Desert Shield and peacekeeping operations).

**Training Opportunities:** PCT offers 16- to 20-hour per week psychology practicum placements (externships); we anticipate having 1 position available for the 2023-2024 training year. Typical schedule for trainees is Monday/Tuesday/Thursday. **Please note that our externship is best suited for externs who are entering their 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year of practicum training and who have previous experience working with patients with PTSD.** Staff supervision is provided by psychologists Shira Maguen, PhD, Jessica Mantia, PhD, Martha Schmitz, PhD, and Courtney Valdez, PhD. The extern will also have the opportunity to engage in individual supervision with one of our post-doctoral fellows, who specialize in working with PTSD in veterans.

Our externs gain proficiency in specialty evaluation, treatment planning, and treatment engagement of veterans with PTSD, many with co-occurring substance use disorders, mood disorders, and/or chronic pain. Using a phase-based approach to trauma recovery (i.e., evaluation, stabilization, exposure/uncovering, integration and relapse prevention, maintenance), our trainees learn to provide both time-limited and long-term individual and group psychotherapy.

Training in the assessment and diagnosis of PTSD primarily takes place in the context of the SFVAHCS Behavioral Health Access Center. This intake clinic serves as the starting point for patients entering mental health care at SFVA. The PCT extern will be assigned to one Access Center shift (2-4 hours weekly), and will work closely with the PTSD specialist on that team, first observing and later conducting specialty PTSD evaluations with close supervision. Supervision is provided by PCT staff both in-clinic and as needed in additional supervision time outside of the Access Center shift.

Training in interdisciplinary and brief treatments for PTSD primarily occurs in the context of the PTSD 360 Clinic on Monday afternoons. This is a multidisciplinary clinic staffed by psychiatry, psychology, social work, and peer support personnel, in which PTSD-specialty medication management and brief individual behavioral treatments are provided. The PCT extern will be assigned to one 3-4 hour clinic shift, in which

the trainee will (1) conduct brief PTSD stabilization-focused individual psychotherapies (typically 12 sessions) and (2) learn and administer brief structured interventions (typically 1-2 sessions), including Motivational Interviewing and Brief CBT for Insomnia. Supervision is provided in-clinic by PCT Post-Doctoral Psychology Residents with the support and guidance of staff who specialize in these areas.

With regard to training in individual psychotherapy for PTSD, the focus in the first few months of the externship training year is on developing competency in stabilization, maintenance, and non-exposure based treatments for PTSD (e.g., psychoeducation and treatment engagement, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for PTSD, Seeking Safety and grounding from emotional pain, etc.). Based on the extern's aptitude in these areas, specialized training in Cognitive-Processing Therapy for PTSD may be provided as well. Though most individual therapy offered in PCT is time-limited and structured, there are also opportunities to provide longer-term care using psychodynamic, interpersonal, and/or other theoretical orientations.

Group psychotherapy is central to our treatment approach, and we offer our patients a full range of modalities, including drop-in psychoeducation, support, wellness, and meditation groups, time-limited skills-based classes, and ongoing long-term process groups. We strive to provide the extern with opportunities to co-facilitate a mix of these, with a supervisory emphasis on learning how to provide group-based treatments that enhance our veterans' knowledge of PTSD symptoms and healthy coping strategies, with focused skill-building to decrease emotional reactivity and increase mindfulness-based self-care.

In addition to individual and group supervision in the context of Access Center and 360 Clinic, the extern will receive 1 hour per week of individual supervision with a PCT staff psychologist and 1 hour per week of individual supervision with a PTSD-specialty post-doctoral fellow, in which the focus will be on individual therapy cases and professional development (including preparing for internship application). In addition, the extern will meet for brief supervision with co-therapist(s) following group therapy meetings, and will receive group supervision on a periodic basis throughout the year.

The PCT extern will also attend a weekly multidisciplinary seminar and clinical conference, which reviews the empirical literature pertaining to a number of different topics relevant to PTSD, including: epidemiological research findings, diagnostic research, treatment research (e.g., relative efficacies of group and individual therapies, research on cognitive behavioral, psychodynamic, exposure therapies), physiological findings in PTSD, psychopharmacological treatment of PTSD, and cultural factors in the expression of and treatment for PTSD within various subpopulations. PCT also offers a biweekly Trauma and Diversity Seminar for PCT psychology trainees and staff. The goal of this seminar is to enhance diversity-related humility in the ongoing pursuit of competence in trauma-focused mental health treatment of veterans.

Contact information: Courtney Valdez, PhD at [courtney.valdez@va.gov](mailto:courtney.valdez@va.gov).



## **Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR)**

The Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR) externship focuses on providing recovery-oriented services to Veterans with diagnoses of serious mental illnesses (SMI). Practicum students will work with Veterans with psychotic spectrum disorders, major depression, bipolar disorder, and severe PTSD, as well as co-occurring conditions. Clinical training may be provided in a number of clinics and programs, across a continuum of coordinated services – primarily the Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC) and the General Psychiatry Outpatient Service (GPOS). Services are provided in line with the Recovery Model of PSR, with the aim to reduce stigma, promote hope, build on Veterans’ strengths, and empower them to pursue individual goals and integrate into their communities.

Opportunities are available to provide recovery-oriented assessment, and evidence-based individual/group interventions to Veterans with SMI, including individual recovery advising and evidence-based, trauma-informed psychotherapies. They will receive in-depth training in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for psychosis (CBTp), and will have opportunities to provide Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Social Skills Training (SST), acceptance and mindfulness-based interventions, and other recovery-oriented services. Externs will also have the opportunity to be involved in the Early Psychosis Intervention Coordination (EPIC) program, supporting the provision of evidence-based Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC) to young adult Veterans with recent onset psychosis.

Across settings, there is an emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration and approaches, and externs are valued members of interdisciplinary teams. Each extern will also participate in one recovery-oriented program development project during the year, and they will be encouraged to disseminate their findings. The number of hours per week for each site and activity will be worked out collaboratively with the student at the outset of the practicum, to take into account the particular student’s skills, interests, and training needs.

Weekly individual and group supervision will be provided by PRRC Psychologist and PSR Training Coordinator, Elena Bassett, PhD, and the PSR Postdoctoral Fellow. Additional supervision may be provided by Jennifer Boyd, PhD, Holly Hamilton, PhD, our Local Recovery Coordinator, and other Staff – depending on the extern’s individual interests and training goals. Externs will also participate in weekly didactic seminars covering a variety of topics related to psychosocial rehabilitation and recovery.

There are 1-2 PSR externship positions available. The externship is structured as a part-time (up to 24 hours/week) training experience over a 12-month period. All trainees must be able to participate in training on Tuesdays, and two other days to be negotiated. The externship may be best suited for more advanced students (though all levels will be considered depending on written materials outlining how the experience would fit in with identified career goals).

Contact information: Dr. Elena Bassett at [elena.bassett@va.gov](mailto:elena.bassett@va.gov)

## Women's Mental Health

The Women's Clinic Mental Health Program provides clinical training in trauma-informed and gender sensitive mental health treatment. **Please note that our externship is best suited for externs who are entering their 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year of practicum training and who have some previous experience working with trauma and evidence-based psychotherapy.** The externship training experience offers an opportunity to work in a collaborative setting with a multidisciplinary team consisting of psychology, psychiatry, social work, nurse practitioners, and primary care providers. Patients in the Women's Clinic are cisgender women and transgendered Veterans from multiple service eras and spouses of disabled Veterans who present with a wide array of mental health issues. Many patients presenting to the Women's Clinic have histories of complex trauma, Military Sexual Trauma, and interpersonal difficulties. The extern in the Women's Clinic will primarily receive training and supervision in the treatment of depression, risk management, personality disorders, PTSD, and anxiety disorders. As a part of standard care for many patients, externs will gain exposure to coordination of care with other SFVA specialty clinics, such as pain management and substance use disorders, other VA resources such as the Vet Center, and community-based mental health services.

The extern in the Women's Clinic has the opportunity to co-facilitate a group with Dr. Leonardo and may be able to co-facilitate another group. In addition, the extern will have the opportunity to provide short and long-term psychotherapy utilizing primarily phase-based treatment, which might include stabilization, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), and trauma-processing. The extern will also participate in the Access Center, an intake clinic for new patients entering or reentering the mental health system at the SFVAMC.

There will be one pre-doctoral externship training position available. The extern will be supervised by primary supervisor and Women's Clinic staff psychologist and Assistant Director of the Women's Mental Health Program, Dr. Jacy Leonardo, and with the likely opportunity for a second hour weekly provided by a postdoctoral fellow. Pre-doctoral externship training in the Women's Clinic is structured as a part-time (20-24 hours/week) training experience over a 12-month period. The training year begins on July 1st and continues through June 30th. The pre-doctoral extern in the Women's Clinic spends their time as follows:

%	Hrs/wk	Training Activity
80	16	Direct patient care
5	1	Seminar/didactic Training
10	2	Individual/Group supervision (Dr. Leonardo/Fellow)
5	1	Case conference

### **Schedule Requirements:** (20-24 hours/week)

In addition, the extern is required to be available on:

- Monday afternoons (1-2pm)
- Friday mornings (8-12pm)
- Remaining hours for the externship will be scheduled based on other clinical responsibilities.

Generally, externs work 3 full days, excluding Thursdays. IF you are interested in participating in the comprehensive DBT program, you may need to be modify your schedule to be available for their program

requirements, which is generally a considered additional time, beyond the Women's MH rotation. Thursdays are not available.

Contact information: Dr. Jacy Leonardo for additional questions: [jacya.leonardo@va.gov](mailto:jacya.leonardo@va.gov)

## **LGBTQ+ and Substance Use Disorders**

The LGBTQ+ and Substance Use Disorders externship is a clinical training experience at the San Francisco VA that began in 2021 and bridges training opportunities across existing substance use disorders clinics, the Trans Health Clinic, and the LGBTQ+ Mental Health Program. This externship will offer experiences in individual and group therapies, with an emphasis on the treatment of substance use disorders and co-occurring conditions, trauma informed care, impacts of minority stress, and sexual and gender identity development. Since this is still a newer training experience, there may also be opportunities to engage in program development and quality improvement projects. Substances used include alcohol, amphetamines, cocaine, benzodiazepines, opiates and cannabis. Co-occurring conditions may include psychiatric disorders such as primary affective disorders and primary psychoses, transient affective or psychotic symptoms resulting from substance abuse, PTSD or other anxiety disorders, dementia and varying degrees of cognitive impairment, and personality disorders. Experiences will occur within the context of multidisciplinary teams consisting of both mental health and medical providers.

There is one substance use disorders seminars that is open and available to externs in the LGBTQ+ and Substance Use Disorders Externship. Externs may participate in the advanced substance use disorders seminar (Wednesdays 1-2:30pm year-round), which often features cutting edge research and guest lecturers who are experts in the field. Externs will be encouraged to develop and deliver case presentations when possible. Additionally, there is a Human Sexuality Seminar available, facilitated by Kaela Joseph, Ph.D. (Tuesdays 8:30-9:30am year-round), which covers a broad range of topics such as working with LGBTQ+ populations, sex and substances, sex therapy, sex and military culture, and more.

Trans Health Clinic and LGBTQ+ Program provide the majority of their services through virtual care, with supervision also offered virtually. The substance abuse programs operate from more of a hybrid model, meaning virtual vs. in person duties are negotiable. Trainees in this rotation are required to be located in the Bay Area, even if the training year is conducted primarily virtually.

Externs will be selected to work with a Staff Psychologist as a primary supervisor, but may have the opportunity to work with other staff through projects and consultation. Additional supervision will be provided by the Postdoctoral Psychology Resident in the Interprofessional LGBTQ+ Healthcare Emphasis and/or the resident in Substance Use Disorders and co-occurring disorders. Days and hours are somewhat flexible but most opportunities will be on Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday so these days are preferred.

Contact Information: Dr. Kellie Rollins ([kellie.rollins2@va.gov](mailto:kellie.rollins2@va.gov)) and Dr. Kaela Joseph ([kaela.joseph@va.gov](mailto:kaela.joseph@va.gov)).

## Psychology Research Assessment Clinic

This rotation will provide training and skills development in general psychiatric assessment, with a focus on depressive and psychotic symptom domains. Psychiatric assessment measures that trainees will be exposed to include the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-5 Disorders, which is a gold standard diagnostic tool for determining DSM-based diagnoses of psychiatric illness, the Clinical Assessment Interview for Negative Symptoms (CAINS), along with other assessments that probe schizophrenia and depression symptomatology. Please note that these assessments do not include patient feedback sessions, therefore do not count as integrated reports.

As part of this rotation, trainees will i) lead and co-lead assessments of psychiatric patients participating in clinical neuropsychiatric research studies, ii) participate in weekly diagnostic consensus meetings with assessment team members that include Psychology and Psychiatry clinicians, and iii) receive weekly group supervision with a licensed clinical psychologist. Clinical didactics relevant to the rotation and related opportunities throughout the SFVA Medical Center system will be made available to interested trainees.

Time Commitment: 16 hours weekly, for 12 months. Trainees should be prepared for work to be remote or in-person depending on current institutional policy.

**Location:** San Francisco VA, Building 8, Ground Floor, Suite 9b.

**Supervisors:** Susanna Fryer, PhD; Samantha Abram, PhD; Emily Pereira, PsyD; Jessica Hua, PhD

**Contact for more information:** Emily Pereira ([Emily.pereira2@va.gov](mailto:Emily.pereira2@va.gov))

## LGBTQ+ Supplemental

The LGBTQ+ supplemental externship is a clinical training experience at the San Francisco VA that is new as of this training year. Externs in this supplemental externship would train in the Trans Health Clinic and the LGBTQ+ Mental Health Program. This externship will offer experiences in individual and group therapies, with an emphasis on working with LGBTQ+ populations, and focus on trauma informed care, impacts of minority stress, and sexual and gender identity development. Since this is still a newer training experience, there may also be opportunities to engage in program development and quality improvement projects.

Didactics will be based on the extern's availability since this is a supplemental experience. Ideally, there is a Human Sexuality Seminar available, facilitated by Kaela Joseph, Ph.D. (Tuesdays 8:30-9:30am year round), which covers a broad range of topics such as working with LGBTQ+ populations, sex and substances, sex therapy, sex and military culture, and more. Other didactic options, however, may be explored if the extern is not available on Tuesday mornings.

Trans Health Clinic and LGBTQ+ Program provide the majority of their services through virtual care, with supervision also offered virtually. The substance abuse programs operate from more of a hybrid model, meaning virtual vs. in person duties are negotiable. Trainees in this rotation are required to be located in the Bay Area, even if the training year is conducted primarily virtually.

Externs will be selected to work with a Staff Psychologist as a primary supervisor, but may have the opportunity to work with other staff through projects and consultation. Additional supervision will be provided by the Postdoctoral

Psychology Resident in the Interprofessional LGBTQ+ Healthcare Emphasis and/or other advanced trainees. Days and hours are somewhat flexible, but most opportunities will be on Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday so these days are preferred. Please note, interviews may occur during the BAPIC timeframe, but selections will be made outside of BAPIC, following the match, since this is a supplemental experience. Contact Information: Dr. Michael Burnias (michael.burnias@va.gov) and Dr. Kaela Joseph (kaela.joseph@va.gov).

San Francisco VA Health Care System  
Psychology Externship Training Program

Please email all materials to: [nicole.torrence@va.gov](mailto:nicole.torrence@va.gov) & [artrisha.jones@va.gov](mailto:artrisha.jones@va.gov)

*Please copy and paste this application into a word document and type.*

**Application Checklist:**

\_\_\_ Sections 1-3 of the application

\_\_\_ Curriculum Vitae

\_\_\_ Three letters of recommendation to support your application. They may be addressed to Dr. Torrence or the supervisors you are applying to and emailed by the writer to the address provided above.

*Note: One of these, from the Director of Training or a professor at your graduate school, must indicate approval of your seeking placement at the SFVAHCS and confirmation of your graduate student standing.*

\_\_\_ Graduate Program Transcript (unofficial will be considered but official will be required if accepted).

*Note: Graduate school transcripts may be mailed separately to the address below if they cannot be sent electronically.*

Please email application materials to: [nicole.torrence@va.gov](mailto:nicole.torrence@va.gov) & [artrisha.jones@va.gov](mailto:artrisha.jones@va.gov)

Transcripts unable to be sent electronically, may be mailed to:

**Nicole Torrence  
Psychological Services  
Mental Health Service  
San Francisco VA Health Care System  
4150 Clement Street (116B)  
San Francisco, CA 94121**

## **Section 1:**

Please rank order those areas of training to which you are applying:

- ☐ Santa Rosa CBOC
- ☐ Couple's and Family Therapy Program
- ☐ General Addictions Clinic
- ☐ General Psychiatric Outpatient Clinic (GPOS)
- ☐ Health Psychology
- ☐ Integrated Care Psychology in HIV and Liver Care
- ☐ Neuropsychology
- ☐ Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR)
- ☐ PTSD Treatment (PCT)
- ☐ Telemental Health Psychology
- ☐ Women's Mental Health
- ☐ LGBTQ+ and Substance Use Disorders
- ☐ Psychology Research Assessment Clinic
- ☐ LGBTQ+ Supplemental

**Name:**

**Mailing Address:**

**Preferred phone number(s):**

**US Citizen:** Yes No\*

\*If no, two conditions must be met for a practicum appointment at the VA; 1) must be legally able to live and work in the US, and 2) must have a US Social Security Number.

☐ Yes, these requirements are met

**Graduate School:**

**Director of Clinical Training:**

**APA Accredited:** Yes No (MUST BE ACCREDITED TO APPLY)

**Type of Program:** Clinical Counseling

**Type of degree:** Ph.D. Psy.D.

**Practicum Training Year (*i.e., first, second, third, elective*):**

**Date of completion of course work for doctoral degree:**

**Date of completion of any qualifying examinations:**

**Date of completion of dissertation:**

**Section 2:**

Please complete the following three essays. Please limit to one page for each essay if possible.

1. Please describe your clinical experience (including clinical settings, patient or client population, duties in each setting, and approximate number of supervised clinical hours in each setting). Also indicate if you expect to obtain additional clinical experience between the time of your application and the beginning of the externship. Discuss the nature of your supervised experience.
2. Please describe your experience with both psychological assessment and research. Also indicate if you expect to acquire more experience before July.
3. Please discuss your interest in the emphasis areas to which you are applying and your goals for externship. Be specific regarding the types of clinical experiences you are seeking. Also, please describe how these goals fit within your overall plan for clinical training during graduate school (you may describe more than one emphasis area in this section).



**Section 3:**

**Agreement Regarding Representation of Training Experience**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (printed name) understand that I am applying a training experience with the Psychological Services/Mental Health Service, San Francisco VA Health Care System that is classified as an “Externship” which is a without compensation part-time practicum training rotation as part of my graduate program training. Should I be accepted to SFVAHCS, I agree to represent this training at all times as an “Externship,” and I agree not to represent it anywhere (whether verbally, on a CV, to a license agency, etc.) as an “Internship” or as part of an internship. I meet the eligibility requirements above.

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Signature

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Date